

Message Text

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53

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 SNM-02 DODE-00 DEAE-00 JUSE-00

TRSE-00 SS-20 NSC-07 OMB-01 H-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 /070 W

----- 089557

P R 091045Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7956

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 1218

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR BM

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT OFFER

REF: (A) STATE 92779; (B) STATE 94821

1. SUMMARY. BELIEVE GUB MAY BE RECEPTIVE TO ALTERNATIVE OF HUSKIES IF WE ARE CAREFUL NOT TO SUGGEST WE HAVE UNILATERALLY ANEG ARBITRARILY BACKED AWAY FROM ORIGINAL OPTION OF HUEYS AS AND WHE JAVAILABLE. IN PRESENTING HUSKIE ALTERNATIVE I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE LATITUDE TO AFFIRM CONTINUED READINESS PROVIDE HUEYS AS PER ORIGINAL OFFER; OR TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE VARIANTS THEY MIGHT PREFER (E.G., HUSKIES NOW, HUEYS LATER). ALSO WE SHOULD CONSIBGR ADVANCE PROVISION OF EXTRA SPARES TO GET SOME OF BURMA AIR FORCE'S PRESENT HUSKIES BACK INTO SERVICE.
END SUMMARY.

2. WE WELCOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS REF (A) AND EXPRESSED DESIRE TO MOVE QUICKLY REF (B). BELIEVE DEPT ASSUMPTION CORRECT THEI GUB IS THINKING OF HELICOPTERS, PRIMARILY FOR TROOP INSERTION AND RESUPPLY AND SECONDARILY FOR RECONNAIS-SANCE AND ADDITIONAL FIREPOWER.

3. BURMESE THINKING HAS BEEN IN TERMS OF THE HUEY AS THE HELI-COPTER MENTIONED IN OUR NOTE OF DECEMBER 1, 1973, BUT WE BELIEVE GUB WOULD READILY CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES, THE MORE SO BECAUSE THEY ARE PROBABLY COUNTING ON DELIVERIES EARLIER THAN REFTEL PARA 2(A)
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INDICATES WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

(A) MAIN REASONS WHY WE BELIEVE GUB WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HUSKIES ARE SHORTER LEAD TIME, LESSER EXPENSE, AND COMPATIBILITY WITH PRESENT EQUIPMENT.

(B) AIRA ESTIMATES FOUR OF BURMA AIR FORCE'S 14 HUSKIES ARE CURRENTLY OPERATIONAL. IT WOULD THEREFORE SEEM ADVANTAGEOUS BOTH TO US AND TO GUB TO EXPLORE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL SPARES NEEDED TO RETURN ADDITIONAL HUSKIES TO SERVICE. OUR JUDGEMENT IS THAT BAF MAINTENANCE CAPABILITIES ARE ADEQUATE TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE; NON-OPERATIONAL STATUS RESULTS FROM GUB LACK OF FUNDS WHICH HAS MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR BAF TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE PIPELINE OF SPARES.

4. IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, TO AVOID PRESENTING THIS ALTERNATIVE TO GUB IN SUCH A WAY AS TO SUGGEST THAT WE HAVE ALREADY MADE UP OUR MINDS TO BACK AWAY FROM PROVIDING HUEYS EVEN IF GUB SHOULD FOR ANY REASON PREFER THIS AIRCRAFT. WE WISH TO BE MINDFUL OF FACT THAT GUB MAY ATTACH PRESTIGE FACTOR TO NEW VS. "OLD" HELICOPTERS. SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT WE BE AUTHORIZED AS NEXT STEP IN NEGOTIATIONS TO OUTLINE TO GUB THE VARIOUS PACKAGES AVAILABLE (HUEYS; HUSKIES PLUS SPARES FOR EXISTING INVENTORY; HUSKIES NOW, HUEYS LATER; AND ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVES WHICH OCCUR TO DEPT) AND INVITE ITS VIEWS AS TO WHICH WOULD BE MOST APPROPRIATE.

5. BEFORE PRESENTING ALTERNATIVES TO GUB WE WILL NEED A FAIRLY FIRM INDICATION OF PROBABLE DELIVERY TIMES ON EACH TYPE OF AIRCRAFT SUGGESTED. FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, WE MIGHT CALCULATE DELIVERY TIMES ON THE BASIS OF AGREEMENT BEING SIGNED BY EARLY AUGUST.

6. IF GUB ELECTS FOR HUSKIES, THIS SHOULD CONSIDERABLY SIMPLIFY TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF DETERMINING BURMESE PERSONNEL, MAINTENANCE, AND OTHER CAPABILITIES. BURMESE EXPERIENCE WITH HUSKIE, AND AIRA'S EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN HELICOPTER OPERATIONS, GIVE US CONFIDENCE THAT BOTH TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES WILL BE FULLY CONSIDERED. BELIEVE WE MIGHT THEREFORE LEAVE OPEN, UNTIL WE HAVE PRELIMINARY BURMESE REACTION TO ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS, THE POSSIBILITIES OF VISIT OF A US TECHNICAL TEAM TO BURMA OR OF BURMESE TEAM TO US.

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7. IT WOULD ALSO BE DESIRABLE AND SERVE TO EXPEDITE NEGOTIATIONS FOR US TO BE ABLE TO GIVE GUB, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND IN ANY CASE BEFORE ANY VISIT BY TECHNICAL TEAM, FIRST DRAFT OF NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT, LEAVING SPECIFICS OF EQUIPMENT*DELIVERY DATES, ETC. TO BE FILLED IN WHEN AGREED. PRESUMABLY IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THIS TO BE AN UNPUBLISHED PROJECT AGREEMENT UNDER 1957 AID BILATERAL AS AMENDED. WE A LME, HOWEVER, THAT IN VIEW OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN PROGRAM AND UNUSUAL NATURE OF

EQUIPMENT BEING SUPPLIED USG WOULD PREFER A PUBLISHED AGGFEMENT.)
AND WE HAVE NO REASON ZN BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO
GUB. EMBASSY COMMENTS ON SUBSTANCE OF AN AGREEMENT WILL FOLLOW
SEPTTEL.
OSBORN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NARCOTICS, DRUG CONTROL, DRUG TRAFFIC, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, POLICIES, HELICOPTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RANGOO01218
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740112-1198
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740561/aaaaccfk.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) STATE 92779; (B) STATE 94821
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <10 FEB 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION EQUIPMENT OFFER
TAGS: SNAR, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005